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MEMOIR

OF

Brig. Gen'l Anthony Walton White

OF THE

CONTINENTAL ARMY.

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BRIG GEN. ANTHONY WALTON WHITE

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COMPILED BY

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Of Freehold, N. J.

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MEMOIR.

Brigadier General Anthony Walton White sprang from an ancient and honorable family in the west of England, which, through six successive generations on this continent, was noted in the elder branch for its attachment to military life. Anthony White was a zealous officer in the civil wars which distracted the reign of his sovereign, Charles I. Shortly after the demise of the Crown, disgusted with the Roundheads, he set sail for Virginia; but, stopping at Bermuda, resolved to remain there, and subsequently became connected with the government of those islands.

Upon the Restoration, he was appointed a member of the King's Council, and chief of one of the groups, an office which appears to have become hereditary, as it was attached to the elder branch for several generations. At the commencement of the political dissensions which followed the establishment of William of Orange on the English throne, Anthony White, the second of the name, inheriting his father's military predilections, was appointed Lieutenant Colonel, serving with the army in Ireland and at the battle of the Boyne. In reward for his services, he was appointed a member of the King's Council and Chief Justice of the Bermudas. He was succeeded as chief by his eldest son, Leonard White, who, with the hereditary thirst unquenched, obtained a commission in the British Navy, and served with distinction in the Wars of the Succession.

Anthony White, the eldest son of the last-named Leonard,

sailed for New York about the year 1715, for the purpose of recruiting his shattered health. After one year's residence he married a Miss Staats, and soon after died on his homeward passage, leaving an only son, Anthony White, who, after having amassed a large fortune by various civil offices in the State of New Jersey, obtained through the influence of his family, at last took up the profession of arms, and was commissioned a Lieutenant Colonel in 1751. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Governor Lewis Morris, of New Jersey. His only son, and fourth child, Anthony Walton White, was born July 7th, 1750, at his seat near New Brunswick, New Jersey. He received his middle name from his relative and godfather, William Walton, of New York. Of his early life, there are no records.

Being the only son of a family eminently in the patronage of the Government, he was educated with much care under the strict supervision of his father, with the expectation of inheriting large estates. At an early age we find him, with the insatiable cupidity characteristic of the servants of a monarchy, in possession of several important and lucrative offices, farmed in like manner as those of his father, and no doubt with equal success. Without any event to distinguish his life, he remained thus, the nominal holder of these offices, quietly pursuing his studies with his father, and assisting him in the care of his large estates, till the outbreak of the memorable Revolution, when an ardent disposition and a sincere love of country induced him to seek adventure in the martial service of his native land. In October, 1775, he received his first military appointment,[1] as aid to General Washington, in whose military family he first heard the din of war. In February, 1776, he was commissioned by Congress as Lieutenant-Colonel of the Third Battalion of New Jersey troops, and as commander of the outposts of the army under Washington, he was actively engaged in the service at

[1] Anthony Walton White, Major and Aid-de-Camp to George Washington, October, 1775; Lieutenant-Colonel Third Battalion, First Establishment, February 9th, 1776.

the North till 1780. In the commencement of that year[1] he was appointed Lieutenant-Colonel commandant of the First Regiment of Cavalry, and shortly afterward was ordered by General Washington to the South to take command of all the cavalry in the Southern army.

In July of 1780, having been repeatedly urged by General Gates to hasten the equipment of the cavalry, and join the army then marching to meet Cornwallis in South Carolina, but despairing of the promised assistance from the government of Virginia, Colonel White procured, upon his own personal credit, the funds necessary to remount and support, for a short time, two regiments, with which he marched to join General Gates, but not in time for the unfortunate battle of the 16th of August, at Camden, which was lost for want of cavalry.

Early in 1781, Colonel White was ordered to Virginia, again to co-operate with the army under Lafayette against Cornwallis. During his marches to that State, he was engaged in various successful skirmishes against the celebrated Colonel Tarleton. The following winter was spent in the Carolinas, watching and endeavoring to check his old enemy, Tarleton. In the maneuver of General Wayne before Savannah, on the 21st of May, 1782, Colonel White contributed largely, by the boldnesss of his charge, in effecting a happy result. Upon the evacuation of that place by the British forces, he returned to South Carolina and entered Charleston immediately after the retirement of the enemy, where the generosity that distinguished him was again exemplified, by his becoming security for the payment of debts incurred by the officers and men of his regiments, who had entered the city in want of almost all the necessaries of life. By agreements between himself and his officers and men, he

[1] Lieutenant-Colonel Fourth Regiment, Light Dragoons, Continental Army, February 13th, 1777; (this regiment appears to have performed its services mostly in the South, where the commanding officer achieved a national reputation as a brilliant cavalry leader;) Lieutenant-Colonel commandant, First Regiment, ditto, December 10th, 1779; Colonel, ditto, February 16th, 1780.—Official Register of the Officers and Men of New Jersey in the Revolutionary War, by Adjutant-General Stryker.

was to be protected from ultimate loss by payment in tobacco—which seems to have been the only sustained currency of the times—that was to be delivered to him at Charleston, on a certain distant day. Owing to the failure of the crops of that year, or the inability of the officers to fulfill their contracts, Colonel White was obliged, for the satisfaction of his creditors, to part with property at the enormous sacrifices peculiar to that period.

In the spring of 1783, Colonel White was married to the young, beautiful and wealthy Margaret Ellis; we say young, for this beautiful girl was then in her fifteenth year. Educated in a city held by a foreign and mercenary enemy, she exhibited an accomplished mind and firmness of temper, which ever characterized and sustained her in the sunken fortunes of her old age. After the establishment of peace, and about a year after his marriage, Col. White retired with his family to the North, to spend the remainder of a life upon which fortune, with a few trifling exceptions, had as yet shed only a pleasant light. Shortly after he had arrived at the North, he was unhappily persuaded by two friends and late officers in the army, to embark in a speculation which nearly ruined him; for being the only responsible party, he was obliged to meet all the obligations of those concerned with him.

He now beheld, with consternation, creditors of whom he had never before heard, who like the Shylocks of reality, demanded of him what, to a man of his constitutional habits was life itself; and in satisfying them, he dissipated entirely his own estates, to which, by the death of his father, he had just succeeded. In 1793 he removed from New York, where he had resided since the war, to New Brunswick, N. J., his native town, where he remained till the close of his life, in 1803. In 1794 he returned again, for a short time, to military life, being appointed by President Washington General of Cavalry, in the expedition under Lee against the Western

insurgents, in the delicate management of which he not only won the esteem and approbation of the inhabitants of the district in which the army was quartered, but also the gratitude of the prisoners, whom, upon the close of the expedition, he conducted to Philadelphia.

General White petitioned Congress for payment of the large sum he had advanced during the dark and troubled days of the Revolution, and which, in the settlement of his accounts with the State of Virginia, had not been allowed for want of full legal evidence.

Born a favorite child of fortune, while such, he possessed and exercised and rejoiced in all the brilliant and fascinating qualities by which men shine in society; and when, in later years, he saw wealth, with all its *éclat*, take to itself wings, though dismayed and despondent, still he faltered not in the principles that had characterized his life; but, wrapping about him the robe of patient endurance, like the stern old Roman, died with the grace that became one who could not with dignity complain.

Often have the walls of his ancient domicile echoed with the voices of Washington, Hamilton, Gates, Kosciusko and others of like distinction. The latter made it his home during a severe sickness, where he received the kind attentions of Mrs. White and her daughter which he so gratefully acknowledged in numerous letters now in possession of the family.

General White was a member of the society of "The Cincinnati,"[1] the order of which descended to his heir and grandson, Anthony Walton White Evans, Esq. His monument

[1] Mrs. Martha J. Lamb, in her "History of the City of New York," 1881, gives an account of the grand procession three days before the adoption of the Federal Constitution by New York, July 23d, 1688 (the State Convention did not adopt it till July 26th): "Mounted on a fine gray horse, elegantly caparisoned and led by two colored men in white Oriental dresses and turbans, Anthony Walton White bore the Arms of the 'United States' in sculpture, preceding the Society of the 'Cincinnati,' in full military uniform."

(beneath the shadow of Christ Church, New Brunswick, N. J.), bears the following inscription:*

BRIG. GEN. ANTHONY WALTON WHITE,
Who departed this life
on the 10th of February, 1803,
In the 53d year of his age,
Rests beneath this monumental stone.
He was an affectionate husband, a tender parent, a sincere and
generous friend, a zealous and inflexible patriot,
and a faithful, active and gallant officer
in the Army of the United States
during the Revolutionary War.

APPENDIX I.

The insignia of "The Order of the Cincinnati" consists of a blue badge bearing a gold eagle, enameled. The order was conferred upon Kosciusko, who, on his return to this country in 1798, exchanged eagles with General White, the same worn by the brave Pole on the day he destroyed the Russian army in 1794. It may not be amiss to state, in this connection, that this interesting relic still exists, owned and greatly prized by General White's representative and only surviving grandson, Anthony Walton White Evans, Esq., of Westchester county, New York, who is also an honored member of our only chivalric order. After ten years' residence in South America and recent extended European travel, this gentleman is spending the noon of an active life in the quiet enjoyment of scientific and literary pursuits. Among many similar contributions from Mr. Evans' pen, we mention two most cordially welcomed by her Majesty's Colonies, viz: A "Paper" (at the request of the New Zealand Government) on "the Preservation of Timber." Also, an "Opinion," at the request of the British Government, through Hon. Mr. Childers, now Secretary of War, on the much-vexed question of "Railway Gauges" for the Colonies, which Paper was published as a Parliamentary document in Victoria, Calcutta, Valparaiso and Switzerland.

APPENDIX II.

GENEALOGICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

The ancestor of the first Anthony White, of the Bermudas, was Capt. John White, sent to Virginia by Sir Walter Raleigh in 1587, as Governor of his colony. He returned in 1588, with supplies in two vessels; but desirous of a gainful voyage, ran in search of Spanish prizes, until, at length, one of the vessels was overpowered, boarded and rifled, and both ships were compelled to return to England. He returned in 1590, only to find the island of Roanoke deserted. Leonard (probably his son) emigrated to Virginia in 1620. Governor White's daughter, Eleanor Dare,

gave birth to a child, the first offspring of English parents in the New World. One of his brothers, Sir John White, also went to Bermuda, probably in 1609, with Sir George Somers. It was "the terrible tempest" and shipwreck which dispersed this company in the above year, which in 1611 suggested Shakespeare's master-piece, "The Tempest." Sir John White married a descendant of Sir Owen Tudor, the ancestor of King Henry the Eighth, and 2d husband of Katharine, widow of the great Henry Fifth.

WHITE, Joanna, sister of Gen. White, b. Nov. 14, 1744, d. s: p: June 26, 1834; 3d wife of Col. John Bayard, b. in Cecil county, Md., Aug. 11, 1738. He was a member of the Council of Safety, Speaker of the House of Representatives, in 1785 a member of the old Congress then in session in New York. In 1789 he removed from Philadelphia to New Brunswick, N. J.: Mayor of that city and Judge of the Court of Common Pleas. He died Jan. 7, 1807. He was a patriot of spotless public and private life, of whom Bancroft says: "He was personally brave, pensive, earnest and devout." He was the great-great-uncle of the present Senator Bayard.

WHITE, Euphemia, 2d sister of Gen. White, b. Dec. 10, 1746, d. s: p: Jan. 29, 1832; married Hon. William Paterson, LL.D., b. 1745; grad. N. J. College, 1763; one of the founders of the Cliosophic Society of said college in 1765; Counsellor-at-law; in 1775 member of the Provincial Congress of New Jersey; Attorney-General of the State in 1775; in 1788 United States Senator; in 1793 nominated by Washington Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States; in 1794 Governor of New Jersey; died Sept. 9, 1806.

STAATS—This family was originally from Albany. Dr. Abraham Staes, who came to New Netherlands in 1642, was the ancester of the Staats of the present day, the name having assumed shortly afterward, the termination it now bears. Dr. Samuel Staats, son of Major Abraham Staats, of Albany, studied his profession in Holland. When the Province of New York surrendered to the English, in 1664, he returned to Holland, remaining there till the Prince of Orange ascended the English throne, in 1688, when he returned to New York, and died there in 1715. He obtained some prominent position in Java, through the influence of William of Orange: and while there married an East India "Begum," or Princess, by whom he had six daughters, all of whom married. In May, 1709, he again married Catharine Hawarden, of New York. Of the nine children which he had in 1703, the first five were probably born in Java or Holland. The *Begum's* six daughters were born as follows: 1. *Sarah*, mar. Isaac Gouvernier in 1704. Their daughter Sarah became the 2d wife of Col. Lewis Morris, of Morrisania. 2. *Gertrude*, mar. in 1716 Andrew Coejeman, of Coejeman's Manor, near Albany. 3. *Catalina*, baptized in New York June 16, 1689. 4. *Anna Elizabeth*, bap. Dec. 21, 1690, mar. Capt. Johannes Schuyler. 5. *Joanna*, bap. Jan. 31, 1694; mar. in 1716 Col. Anthony White, of "The Bermudas." She mar. for her 2d husband

Admiral Norton Kelsall, R. N., whose portrait by Sir Godfrey Kneller (1646–1723) is in possession of the Evans family. This great artist painted ten crowned heads, among whom were Louis Fourteenth and Charles the Second. 6. *Tryntje*, bap. April 5, 1697, and *first wife* of Col. Lewis Morris. His second wife was Tryntje's own niece. Two sons, among the "*Immortals*," were born of these two marriages, viz.: General Lewis Morris, signer of the "Declaration," and Gouverneur Morris, author of "The Constitution of the United States," who were half-brothers. Another brother, General Staats Morris, mar. in London Catharine, Dowager-Duchess of Gordon, and d. of William, 2d Earl of Aberdeen. Their grandfather, Lewis Morris, was first royal Governor of the Province of New Jersey, after its separation from New York in 1738. He was born in 1672, d. May, 1746; owned large estates in Monmouth county, N. J. He married "*a Graham of the Isles*," of the family of the Earl of Montrose, and daughter of James Graham, Attorney-General of New York. 3d Nov., 1691, is the date of their marriage.

Ellis, Margaret. Her mother was a Vanderhorst, sister of Elias Vanderhorst, American Consul at Bristol, England, in 1780. He is honorably mentioned in the last edition of Jane Porter's "Thaddeus of Warsaw." Elias Vanderhorst was the immediate lineal descendant of Baron Vanderhorst, of Holland. In America, the adopted country of the Vanderhorsts, one nephew of Elias Vanderhorst filled the office of Governor of South Carolina, another that of Secretary of State, and a third that of General. This family is represented by the children of the late Major Arnoldus Vanderhorst, of Charleston, S. C.—*Burke's "History of the Commons."*

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